News From Somewhere

by
Project
Alphistia
July 2025
alphistia@gmail.com

Homage to William Morris

THIS IS THE PICTURE OF THE OLD HOUSE BY THE THAMES TO WHICH THE PEOPLE OF THIS STORY WENT & HEREAFTER FOLLOWS THE BOOK IT SELF WHICH IS CALLED NEWS FROM NOWHERE OR AN EPOCH OF REST & IS WRITTEN BY WILLIAM MORRIS
NEWS FROM NOWHERE OR AN EPOCH OF REST
CHAPTER I DISCUSSION AND BED

William Morris was an English writer and designer who published a utopian novel called "News from Nowhere" in 1890. He was a socialist, although solidly from the upper class of Great Britain. He made a fortune designing beautiful home furnishings for the emerging middle classes.

The word "utopia" means nowhere, so it was appropriate for Morris to give his book the title he did. For me, I'd like to hope that Alphistia could be "somewhere" one day. And so, the name for this substack-style newsletter.

I will publish occasionally, perhaps once a month, perhaps more often if I am especially feeling productive and inspired.

Goodbye Facebook

Recently I have gone off facebook, after almost twenty years there. It was only in the last five years or so that I became more and more dissatisfied with it.

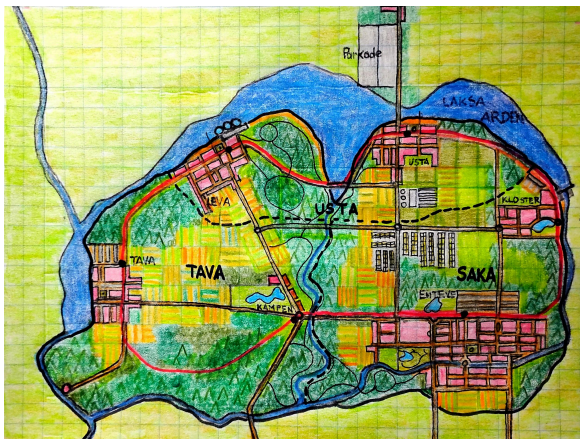
The biggest problem of course was Zuckerbuck$. Never an admirable person, he became even less likable as the years passed. Zuck's focus has always been about enshittification. That seed was planted with the founding of facebook when he was in college. He created it so he could rate girls he wanted to shtoop. It more or less went downhill from there.

When he monetized it, an unrelenting effort to control our experience never let up. The ads have ALWAYS been the primary reason for facebook. We're just the marketable units for selling things, nearly all of it crap. The ads are targeted to us based on what we post, but fb's marketing algorithms are unsophisticated, crude and vulgar. When I started to get ads to go over to neighboring Indiana for gun sales and was bombarded with ketamine ads, I knew it was because I'd criticized both guns and Musk's drug abuse. The bots don't care about nuance, they just wanted to sell.

Then I read about the esteemed historian and writer Rebecca Solnit being banned from facebook, because she used the word "violent" in an essay about Gaza. Her account was deleted, an appeal denied. Due to influential friends, by the end of the day, humans intervened and restored her account. No explanation, and emphatically, no apology.

That is when I decided I had to get out of the madhouse. I won't miss the stupid ads, the idiotic algorithms which decide which of my friends would appear with updates on my feed, and those who would NEVER appear, like my own brother! I won't miss the "suggested" groups in my feed either, which almost always were not something I really had any interest in. And I will not miss Zuckerbucks, a loathsome man far beyond his mediocre intelligence, personality, and demeanor. Good riddance.

Alphistia Small and Beautiful



Alphistia has had various shapes and sizes through its 58 year history. After all, it started in the backyard in my family's home in early 1968, after I invented an alphabet and outlined the first aspects of a country of my own in December, 1967.

The "norm" these days is Alphistia as the size of one of the microstates of Europe, like Andorra, San Marino, or Liechtenstein. Its shape echoes Singapore or the Isle of Wight (off the coast of southern England).

But as a prototype for a permanent entity, this year I began drawing and writing about a "one-square mile" Alphistian community of just about 2000 people. It would not be far from where I currently live in the US, as a temporary home. There, members of Project Alphistia could provide a living model for what their society would be like on a very small scale.

Amana Iowa, a religious community that practiced communalism for decades, is a place that has some similarities to my mini-Alphistia. It relies on some cottage industries and tourism to get by, although many of its inhabitants work in the nearby cities of Iowa City and Cedar Rapids.

I am writing a zine about this project with the (working) title "Alphistia Small and Beautiful". A series of illustrations are being drawn this summer along with a description. It will be for sale at the local Small Press Fest Urbana in mid-October that I'll attend.

The Nerd Reich

More dangerous than "Project 2025" is a neo-fascist ideology by people working behind-the-scenes. It is largely inspired by a somewhat obscure software developer by the name of Curtis Yarvin. He has had a lot of influence on "Broligarchs": techbros and politicians affiliated with them, primarily Peter Thiel, Marc Andreessen, J D Vance, Josh Hawley, and Balaji Srinivasan. The core of the ideology, (called by other names NRx (Neo-Reactionary) or the "Dark Enlightenment") would be city-state entities replacing nation states. They would be controlled by non-elected "monarchs" (ie dictators) and business/tech elites. Instead of large nation-states, there would be city-states ("The Network State" or "Freedom Cities" or "Liberty Cities"). They would be anti-democratic, autocratic, with minimal civil rights and no social rights. The writer Gil Duran has done extensive (and excellent) research on this dystopian movement.

They like to think of themselves as "libertarian", but this ideology is not that in the slightest: it's all about control. That's what the oligarchs crave, and that's what the ideologues like Curtis Yarvin and Thiel are trying to create.

The Republican Party, MAGA, and especially trump, are simply TOOLS for them to access the power they want to have. If people don't like that, they can EMIGRATE. The ideologues promise "The Right to Exit" is the ONLY civil right a person will need in their envisioned society Otherwise they are expected to shut-up and do as they are told.

The MAGA masses would be irrelevant. Most of them would be replaced by AI within a few years, and they would be a very large “lumpy” proletariat controlled by AI-generated bread and circuses. When necessary, they would be used as orcs in wars to distract any discontent domestically. It would be a techno-feudalism, with “monarchs” ruling in perpetuity.

Where would dissenters go to exercise their only civil right? Perhaps they could flee to a microstate like Alphistia, established somewhere safe and based on democratic and progressive ideas. Some traditional countries along authoritarian NATIONALIST lines would likely survive, such as Russia and China.

Technofascist city-states could very well replace the USA though, which would survive only in Mad Max anarchy, not a real nation state. The Broligarchs have no real need for the gigantic United States, at least politically. They'd prefer to have fiefdoms with hundreds of mini Caligulas.

Like fascist regimes of yore, this system would be unstable. The Nazis began in 1923 and were defeated in 1945, Mussolini ruled for about 20 years as well. Such tight control breeds resentment and is never based on popularity. Not everyone opposing the New Order would emigrate and there would be opposition no matter what. A repressive apparatus would need to use totalitarian methods to ensure compliance. A society of bee-like drones might satisfy the tiny ruling elite, but is not a long-term guarantee of stability. Far from it.

The ideology has many contradictions. Techno-capitalism is not “green”, so of course such a system would continue to rape the environment and exploit resources until they are exhausted. Such a system would be extremely corrupt at every level of society, since there would be no rule of law, except the whims of the dictator issuing edicts. And the city-states of course would fight amongst themselves, and mini-wars would inevitably erupt. China and Russia would never give up nuclear weapons, and neither would any replacement entities for the USA.

It's a very grim future, but the people behind this (particularly the behind-the-scenes Yarvin), Thiel, Vance, Andreessen, non-tech bros like Steve Bannon, Project 25 apparatchiks, and other far right allies...they all want that. They want power for themselves and domination over all the rest of us. All these toxic MEN (and the vast majority of them ARE males) are fascist to the core. Fascist states historically do not last.. The Nerd Reich would ultimately fail, if it doesn’t destroy the world first.

source for photo and term "Nerd Reich" is Gil Duran at https://www.thenerdreich.com/

Urbana Small Press Fest

Project Alphistia will take part in the Urbana Small Press Fest on Saturday October 11 at the Lincoln Square Mall. It is held every two years, and the Alphistia participated in 2023, with very good results.

There will likely be 6 zines and published books this time: “Atlas of Alphistia”, “Alphistia Small and Beautiful”, “Info Alphistia”, “Alphistia Zine” and two books from Roho Press: “Alphistia Is My Homeland” and “The Reluctant American: My Life as an Alphistian”. All the materials will be for sale at moderate prices.

Pushkin is Diabetic

Beloved Pushkin, Project Alphistia's mascot, was sick a few months ago. After a local vet gave him a thorough work-up, alas it was discovered he is diabetic. Luckily though he isn't insulin dependent. He takes one pill each day with his food. It has worked incredibly well. He is back to his frisky, happy self and looks great 🙂

Contact

alphistia@gmail.com

On the web:

https://bsky.app/profile/alphistia.bsky.social

and

https://alphistian.blogspot.com/?view=flipcard

Vanya in Champaign

In 1978, I moved into an old house just a few streets away from the University of Kentucky campus. It was owned by UK and rented out to students who were studying Russian. The monthly rent was $160, plus utilities. For a room of my own, my share was $40…there were 4 of us in the house.

Right before fall classes started, an engineering student moved in named Johnny. We called him Vanya of course :) It was a very pleasant year with him at the "Ruskii Dom". With a few long gaps, we stayed in touch in the decades after we graduated. Now, in the summer of 2025, Vanya is living just two blocks from me in Champaign IL. He's been traveling around the country riding his bike, and for now he's exploring the Prairie. Absolutely wonderful to have him nearby!